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February 1, 2012

Karl Morell
Of Counsel
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E-FILED

Ms. Victoria Rutson
Chief, Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

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Office of the Secretary

FEB - 1 2012

Part of
Public Record

Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X); BNSF Railway
Company --Abandonment Exemption -- in Page and Fremont
Counties, Iowa

Dear Ms. Rutson:

Enclosed for filing in STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) are
BNSF Railway Company's Environmental and Historic Reports
prepared pursuant to 49 C.F.R. §§1105.7 and 1105.8.

BNSF anticipates filing a Petition for Exemption seeking authority to
abandon the 5.95-mile rail line on or after February 21, 2012.

Sincerely,

Karl Morell
Of Counsel

KM:mjl
Enclosure

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY)	
ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION)	DOCKET NO. AB-6
IN PAGE AND FREMONT COUNTIES,)	(SUB-NO. 479X)
IOWA)	

ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC REPORTS

BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY
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Fort Worth, TX 76161-0057

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Service Date: February 1, 2012

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

(49 C.F.R. § 1105.7)

(1) Proposed Action and Alternatives. Describe the proposed action, including commodities transported, the planned disposition (if any) of any rail line and other structures that may be involved, and any possible changes in current operations or maintenance practices. Also describe any reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. Include a readable, detailed map and drawings clearly delineating the project.

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") proposes to abandon 5.95 miles of railroad line located between Milepost 20.05, at Shenandoah, and Milepost 26.0, at Farragut, in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa (the "Line"). A map of the project area is attached as **Exhibit A**.

BNSF intends to exercise the abandonment authority and convert the portion of the Line between Milepost 20.05 and Milepost 21.90 to industry track and sell the industry track to Green Plains Shenandoah LLC ("GPS"), an ethanol customer, for staging trains. Unless railbanked, the remainder of the Line between Milepost 21.90 and Milepost 26.00 will be abandoned. The City of Farragut has expressed an interest in railbanking the remainder of the Line within its city limits. See **Exhibit B**, attached letter from the City of Farragut.

The following information addresses BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of track materials such as rails and ties, but the roadbed will be left intact for the portion of the line not converted to industry track. If the Line is railbanked the bridges will not be removed.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right-of-way, the rails and related

steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from among the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be re-sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right-of-way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the Line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right-of-way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.

Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions imposed by the Office of Environmental Analysis of the Surface Transportation Board (OEA) in their final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including OEA-imposed conditions, if applicable.

The portion of the Line between Milepost 21.90 and Milepost 26.0 has been out of

service. Therefore, only limited maintenance has been performed on that portion of the Line in recent years. Consequently, the proposed abandonment will have limited impact on rail freight operations and maintenance practices on the Line.

The only alternative to abandonment would be not to abandon the Line and forego the opportunity costs of not salvaging the Line.

(2) Transportation System *Describe the effect of the proposed action on regional or local transportation systems and patterns. Estimate the amount of traffic (passenger or freight) that will be diverted to other transportation systems or modes as a result of the proposed action.*

No passenger traffic will be diverted to other modes as a result of the proposed abandonment. There has been no overhead traffic on this Line for many years. Therefore, the proposed abandonment will have no adverse effect on local or regional transportation systems or patterns.

(3) Land Use

(i) *Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies.*

The proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. BNSF contacted the cities of Farragut and Shenandoah and the counties of Page and Fremont.

Ms. Becki Sickman, City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Farragut, replied in an e-mail dated December 14, 2011, stating, "...as long as said abandonment is part of the extended trails anticipated use, the City of Farragut sees no inconsistencies." Brandon Burneister, Assistant Page County Engineer, Office of Page County Engineer, replied in a letter dated November 9, 2011, stating, "Page County has no comments about the abandonment

at this time.” As of the date of this Environmental Report, the City of Shenandoah and Fremont County have not responded to our inquiry. A copy of the respective e-mail and letters are attached as **Exhibit B**.

(ii) Based on consultation with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, state the effect of the proposed action on any prime agriculture land.

BNSF does not believe the proposed abandonment will have any effect on any prime agriculture land. BNSF contacted Richard Sims, State Conservationist, Iowa NRCS, concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit C**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, Iowa NRCS has not responded to our inquiry.

(iii) If any action affects land or water uses within a designated coastal zone, include the coastal zone information required by § 1105.9.

BNSF does not believe the proposed abandonment is located within a designated coastal zone. BNSF contacted the Iowa Department of Natural Resources concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit D**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, Iowa Department of Natural Resources has not responded to our inquiry.

(iv) If the proposed action is an abandonment, state whether or not the right-of-way is suitable for alternative public use under 49 U.S.C. § 10905 and explain why.

The right-of-way does not appear to be suitable for alternative public use other than a recreational trail. The City of Farragut has expressed an interest in railbanking the Line.

(4) Energy

(i) Describe the effect of the proposed action on transportation of energy resources.

The proposed abandonment will have no effect on the transportation of energy resources.

(ii) Describe the effect of the proposed action on recyclable commodities.

The proposed abandonment will not adversely affect movement or recovery of recyclable commodities.

(iii) State whether the proposed action will result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency and explain why.

The proposed action will not result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency.

(iv) If the proposed action will cause diversions from rail to motor carriage of more than:

(A) 1,000 rail carloads a year, or

(B) an average of 50 rail carloads per mile per year for any part of the affected line, quantify the resulting net change in the energy consumption and show the data and methodology used to arrive at the figure given.

The proposed action will not cause such diversions.

(5) Air

(i) If the proposed action will result in either:

(A) an increase in rail traffic of at least 100 percent (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least eight trains a day on any segment of the line affected by the proposal, or

(B) an increase in rail yard activity of at least 100 percent (measured by carload activity), or

(C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10 percent of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on any affected road segment, quantify the anticipated effect on air emissions.

The proposed action will not result in meeting or exceeding the specified thresholds for increased rail or truck traffic as outlined in (i) (A), (B) or (C) above.

(ii) If the proposed action affects a class I or nonattainment area under the Clean Air Act, and will result in either:

(A) an increase in rail traffic of at least 50 percent (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least three trains a day on any segment of rail line,

(B) an increase in rail yard activity of at least 20 percent (measured by carload activity), or

(C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10 percent of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on a given road segment, then state whether any expected increased emissions are within the parameters established by State Implementation Plan. However, for a rail construction under 49 U.S.C. § 10901 (or 49 U.S.C. § 10505) or a case involving the reinstitution of service over a previously abandoned line, only the three train a day threshold in this item shall apply.

The proposed action will not result in meeting or exceeding the specified thresholds in

(ii) (A), (B) or (C) above.

(iii) If the transportation of ozone depleting materials (such as nitrogen oxide and Freon) is contemplated, identify: the materials and quantity; the frequency of service; safety practices (including any speed restrictions); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and spills; contingency plans to deal with accidental spills; and the likelihood of an accidental release of ozone depleting materials in the event of a collision or derailment.

The proposed abandonment will not affect the transportation of ozone depleting materials.

(6) Noise If any of the thresholds identified in item (5) (i) of this section are surpassed, state whether the proposed action will cause:

(i) an incremental increase in noise levels of three decibels Ldn or more; or

(ii) an increase to a noise level of 65 decibels Ldn or greater. If so, identify sensitive receptors (e.g. schools, libraries, hospitals, residences, retirement communities and nursing homes) in the project area and quantify the noise increase for these receptors if the thresholds are surpassed.

Not Applicable.

(7) Safety

(i) Describe any effects of the proposed action on public health and safety (including vehicle delay time at railroad crossings).

This abandonment should have no adverse effect on public health or safety. There is one closed pedestrian at-grade crossing, eight private at-grade crossings (three active and five closed), and seven public at-grade crossings (one active and six closed) on the Line. The City of Farragut has expressed an interest in railbanking the Line.

(ii) If hazardous materials are expected to be transported, identify: the materials and quantity; the frequency of service; whether chemicals are being transported that, if mixed, could react to form more hazardous compounds; safety practices (including any speed restrictions); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and hazardous spills; the contingency plans to deal with accidental spills, and the likelihood of and accidental release of hazardous materials.

The abandonment will not result in the transportation of hazardous materials.

(iii) If there are any known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been known hazardous material spills on the right-of-way, identify the location of those sites and the types of hazardous materials involved.

There are no known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been known hazardous material spills on the right-of-way.

(8) Biological Resources

(i) Based on consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state whether the proposed action is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat, and if so, describe the effects.

BNSF does not believe the proposed abandonment is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat. BNSF contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached Exhibit E) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service has not responded to our inquiry.

(ii) State whether wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests will be affected, and describe any effects.

BNSF does not believe the proposed abandonment is likely to affect any wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, or any National or State parks or forests. BNSF contacted the National Park Service concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit F**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, the National Park Service has not responded to our inquiry.

BNSF also contacted the Bureau of Land Management concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit G**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, the Bureau of Land Management has not responded to our inquiry.

(9) Water

(i) Based on consultation with State water quality officials, state whether the proposed action is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards. Describe any inconsistencies.

BNSF believes the proposed abandonment is consistent with applicable Federal, State and local water quality standards. BNSF contacted the US EPA Region 7 concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit H**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, the US EPA Region 7 has not responded to our inquiry.

(ii) Based on consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state whether permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344) are required for the proposed action and whether any designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains will be affected. Describe the effects.

BNSF does not believe the proposed abandonment will affect any designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains. BNSF sent a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock

Island District. Ms. Donna Jones, Chief, Enforcement Section Regulatory Branch, replied in a letter dated November 16, 2011, stating, "We determined the project as proposed does not require a Department of the Army (DA) Section 404 permit." A copy of the letter is attached as **Exhibit I**.

(iii) State whether permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1342) are required for the proposed action. (Applicants should contact the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the state environmental protection or equivalent agency if they are unsure whether such permits are required).

BNSF believes the proposed abandonment will not require any permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act. BNSF contacted the US EPA Region 7 concerning the proposed abandonment (see attached **Exhibit H**) and as of the date of this Environmental Report, the US EPA Region 7 has not responded to our inquiry.

(10) Proposed Mitigation. Describe any actions that are proposed to mitigate adverse environmental impacts, indicating why the proposed mitigation is appropriate.

BNSF does not expect any adverse environmental impact from the proposed abandonment and, therefore, sees no need for any mitigating actions. BNSF will, of course, consult (as required) with any recipients of this Environmental Report regarding appropriate mitigation actions and will comply with those mitigation actions required by the Board.

HISTORIC REPORT

(49 C.F.R. § 1105.8)

(1) Proposed Action and Alternatives. Describe the proposed action, including commodities transported, the planned disposition (if any) of any rail line and other structures that may be involved, and any possible changes in current operations or maintenance practices. Also describe any reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. Include a readable, detailed map and drawings clearly delineating the project.

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") proposes to abandon the 5.95 miles of railroad line located between Milepost 20.05, at Shenandoah, and Milepost 26.0, at Farragut, in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa (the "Line"). A map of the project area is attached as **Exhibit A**.

BNSF intends to exercise the abandonment authority and convert the portion of the Line between 20.05 and Milepost 21.90 to industry track and sell the industry track to Green Plains Shenandoah LLC ("GPS"), an ethanol customer, for staging trains. Unless railbanked, the remainder of the Line between Milepost 21.90 and Milepost 26.00 will be abandoned. The City of Farragut has expressed interest in railbanking the remainder of the Line within its city limits. See **Exhibit B**, attached letter from the City of Farragut.

Following is information addresses BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of track materials such as rails and ties, but the roadbed will be left intact for the portion of the line not converted to industry track. If the Line is railbanked, the bridges will not be removed.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right-of-way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are

raised from among the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be re-sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right-of-way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the Line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right-of-way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.

Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historic conditions imposed by the Office of Environmental Analysis of the Surface Transportation Board (OEA) in their final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including OEA-imposed conditions, if applicable.

The portion of the Line between Milepost 21.90 and Milepost 26.0, has been out of service. Therefore, only limited maintenance has been performed on that portion of the Line in recent

years. Consequently, the proposed abandonment will have limited impact on rail freight operations and maintenance practices on the Line.

The only alternative to abandonment would be not to abandon the Line and forego the opportunity costs of not salvaging the Line.

HISTORIC REPORT

1. ***A U.S.G.S. topographic map (or an alternate map drawn to scale and sufficiently detailed to show buildings and other structures in the vicinity of the proposed action) showing the location of the proposed action, and the locations and approximate dimensions of railroad structures that are 50 years old or older and are part of the proposed action.***

The required topographic map is attached to this Report as Exhibit A.

2. ***A written description of the right-of-way (including approximate widths, to the extent known), and the topography and urban and/or rural characteristics of the surrounding area***

The subject Line extends approximately 5.95 miles between Milepost 20.05, at Shenandoah, and Milepost 26.0, at Farragut, in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa. The portion of the Line between 20.05 and Milepost 21.90 will be converted to industry track and sold to GPS, an ethanol customer, for staging trains. The remainder of the Line between Milepost 21.90 and Milepost 26.00 will be abandoned unless it is railbanked. The City of Farragut has expressed interest in railbanking the remainder of the Line within its city limits. The average width of the right-of-way is generally 100 feet wide in rural areas and 200 feet wide in station grounds. There are no federally granted rights of way involved.

3. ***Good quality photographs (actual photographic prints, not photocopies) of railroad structures on the property that are 50 years old or older and of the immediately surrounding area.***

There are six bridges on the Line. They are as follows:

- 1) Milepost 20.33 – 41' long, 2' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1930
- 2) Milepost 21.66 – 53' long, 9' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1932
- 3) Milepost 22.26 – 138' long, 21' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1914
- 4) Milepost 23.26 – 8' long, 6' high, rail stringer, built in 1928
- 5) Milepost 23.66 – 57' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1926
- 6) Milepost 23.93 – 70' long, 9' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1929

If the Line is railbanked, the bridges will not be removed. See **Exhibit J**, attached photographs.

4. *The date(s) of construction of the structure(s), and the date(s) and extent of any major alterations, to the extent such information is known.*

There are six bridges on the Line. They are as follows:

- 1) Milepost 20.33 – 41' long, 2' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1930
- 2) Milepost 21.66 – 53' long, 9' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1932
- 3) Milepost 22.26 – 138' long, 21' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1914
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- 5) Milepost 23.66 – 57' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1926
- 6) Milepost 23.93 – 70' long, 9' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1929

If the Line is railbanked, the bridges will not be removed. See **Exhibit J**, attached photographs.

5. *A brief narrative history of carrier operations in the area, and an explanation of what, if any, changes are contemplated as a result of the proposed action.*

On February 12, 1849, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company ("CB&Q") was incorporated as Aurora Branch Railroad Company. On June 22, 1852, the name changed to Chicago and Aurora Railroad Company. On February 14, 1855, the name changed to The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company. In 1901, the Great Northern Railway Company and Northern Pacific Railway Company jointly acquired control of CB&Q. On March 2, 1970, Great Northern Railway Company and Northern Pacific Railway Company were merged into Great Northern Pacific and Burlington Lines,

Inc., pursuant to an Agreement of Merger dated as of January 26, 1961 (Northern Lines Merger Agreement). On March 2, 1970, CB&Q then merged into the Great Northern Pacific and Burlington Lines, Inc. pursuant to an Agreement of Merger dated as of January 26, 1961, (Burlington Merger Agreement). A Certificate of Amendment of Certificate of Incorporation of Great Northern Pacific and Burlington Lines, Inc. dated February 12, 1970, was filed in the office of the Secretary of State of Delaware on March 2, 1970, and the name of the company changed to Burlington Northern Inc. ("BNI"). On May 14, 1981, BNI's name changed to Burlington Northern Railroad Company ("BNRR") and it became a wholly-owned subsidiary of BNI. BNRR merged with The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company in 1996 to become The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company, which name was changed to BNSF Railway Company in 2005.

6. *A brief summary of documents in the carrier's possession, such as engineering drawings, that might be useful in documenting a structure that is found to be historic.*

Documents in BNSF's possession concerning this abandonment may include alignment maps showing the right-of-way and/or station maps. These documents are too large for practical reproduction in this report, but can be furnished upon request, if they are available.

7. *An opinion (based on readily available information in the railroad's possession) as to whether the site and/or structures meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 60.4), and whether there is a likelihood of archeological resources or any other previously unknown historic properties in the project area, and the basis for these opinions (including any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Office, local historical societies or universities).*

BNSF sent a letter to the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHPO) in reference to the proposed abandonment. Mr. Douglas Jones, Archaeologist and Review and Compliance Program Manager and Interim Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, replied in a letter dated January 23, 2012, stating, "Based on your information, it is our opinion that this section of track and the

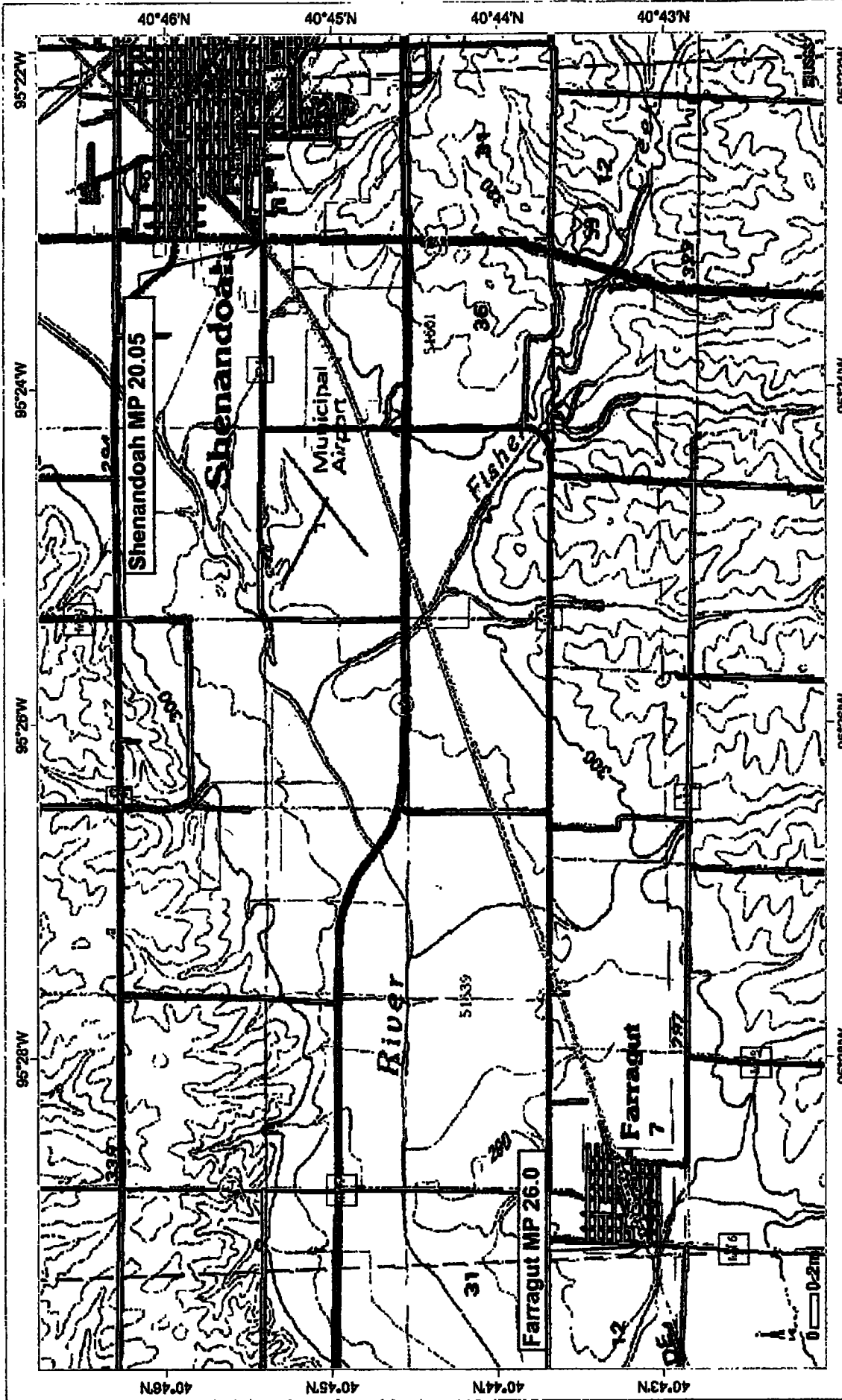
six bridges do not meet any of the eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.” SHPO also encouraged BNSF to contact the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa to get an archaeological site background check. BNSF has contacted the University of Iowa and will forward its findings to SHPO as soon as it has been received. A copy of SHPO’s letter is attached as **Exhibit K**.

8. ***A description (based on readily available information in the railroad's possession) of any known prior subsurface ground disturbance or fill, environmental conditions (naturally occurring or manmade) that might affect the archeological recovery of resources (such as swampy conditions or the presence of toxic wastes), and the surrounding terrain.***

The Line was disturbed during original construction by cuts and fill and any archaeological resources that may have been located in the proposed project area would have been affected at that time. Our records do not indicate any environmental conditions that might affect the archaeological recovery of resources.

9. ***Within 30 days of receipt of the historic report, the State Historic Preservation Officer may request the following additional information regarding specific non railroad owned properties or groups of properties immediately adjacent to the railroad right-of-way: photographs of specified properties that can be readily seen from the railroad right-of-way (or other public rights-of-way adjacent to the property) and a written description of any previously discovered archeological sites, identifying the location and type of the site (i.e. prehistoric or native American).***

If any additional information is requested, BNSF will promptly supply the necessary information.



40°46'45"N
95°29'50"W
Map Extent
95°21'55"W
40°42'3"N



Geographic Coordinate System (WGS84)

Sims, John A

From: City Of Farragut <cityoffarragut@westianet.net>
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 2:14 PM
To: Sims, John A
Subject: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company-Abandonment Exemption- in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa

Dear Mr. Sims;

I apologize for being so late with a response to your letter.

We have begun the process of purchasing the abandoned railway within the City limits of Farragut to embark on the initial stages of a rails to trails, so on behalf of the City of Farragut I would like to comment on the proposed abandonment beginning at Milepost 20.05 in Shenandoah and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 26.0 in Farragut, stating that as long as said abandonment is part of the extended trails anticipated use, the City of Farragut sees no inconsistencies.

Please let me know if you would still prefer something by mail or if this email will suffice.

Thank You!

Beckl L. Sickman
City Clerk/ Treasurer
City of Farragut
Phone: 712-385-8660
Fax: 712-385-8355
cityoffarragut@westianet.net



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal
Law Department

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November 4, 2011

City of Shenandoah
City Hall
500 W Clarinda Ave
Shenandoah, IA 51601

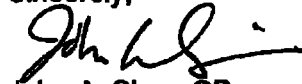
**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company -
Abandonment Exemption - in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in the near future an exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 5.95 miles of rail line in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa, beginning at Milepost 20.05 in Shenandoah and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 26.0 in Farragut.

As part of the environmental report, BNSF is required to contact you to determine if the proposed abandonment is consistent with existing land use plans. If applicable, please describe any inconsistencies.

Your assessment and comments are respectfully requested. For your reference a map of the subject railroad line is enclosed. Please provide your response to me at the address above, if at all possible, by December 16, 2011. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes - BNSF - courtney.estes@bnsf.com
Karl Morell - Ball Janik LLP - kmorell@bjllp.com
Susan Odom - BNSF - susan.odom@bnsf.com
Mark Norton - BNSF - mark.norton@bnsf.com
Farah Ali - BNSF - farah.ali@bnsf.com



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal
Law Department

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2500 Lou Mank Drive - AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828
tel 817-352-2376
fax 817-352-2387
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

Fremont County
Planning Commission
506 Filmore St., PO Box 760
Sidney, Iowa 51652-0760

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company –
Abandonment Exemption – in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

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Sincerely,

John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – courtney.estes@bnsf.com
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – kmorell@bjllp.com
Susan Odom – BNSF – susan.odom@bnsf.com
Mark Norton – BNSF – mark.norton@bnsf.com
Farah Ali – BNSF – farah.ali@bnsf.com

OFFICE OF
PAGE COUNTY ENGINEER

123 W. WASHINGTON ST.
CLARINDA, IOWA 51632

BRADLEY J. SKINNER, P.E. & P.L.S.
COUNTY ENGINEER

PHONE 712 542-2510
FAX 712 542-2766

BRANDON BURMEISTER, E.I.
Assistant County Engineer

JUDY RIDNOUR
Office Manager

November 9, 2011

**RE: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company –
Abandonment Exemption – in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

Mr. Sims:

The anticipated rail line abandonment of 5.95 miles of line from Shenandoah to Farragut will be entirely in Fremont County. Page County has no comments about the abandonment at this time.

Sincerely,



Brandon Burmeister, EI
Assistant Page County Engineer



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal
Law Department

BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828
tel 817-352-2376
fax 817-352-2397
Email john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

Richard Sims, State Conservationist
Iowa NRCS
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company –
Abandonment Exemption – In Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in the near future an exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 5.95 miles of rail line in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa, beginning at Milepost 20.05 in Shenandoah and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 26.0 in Farragut.

As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know whether or not the proposed abandonment will have any effect on prime agricultural lands. Your assessment and comments are respectfully requested.

For your reference a map of the subject railroad line is enclosed. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of the rails, ties and bridges; however, the railroad right of way, ballast and culverts will remain in place.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right of way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from among the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be re-sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right of way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right of way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted. Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions recommended by the Office of Environmental Analysis and imposed by the Surface Transportation Board in their final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including STB-imposed conditions, if applicable.

Please provide your assessment and comments to me at the address above, if at all possible, by December 16, 2011. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – courtney.estes@bnsf.com
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – kmorell@bjllp.com
Susan Odom – BNSF – susan.odom@bnsf.com
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BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Drive - AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2628
tel 817-352-2378
fax 817-352-2397
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Water Supply Section
401 SW 7th Street, Suite M
Des Moines, IA 50309

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As part of the environmental report, BNSF is required to contact your agency to determine if the proposed abandonment:

1. will affect land or water uses within a designated coastal zone;
2. is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards (with a description of any inconsistencies identified); and
3. will require permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1342).

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Please provide your assessment and comments to me at the address above, if at all possible, by December 16, 2011. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

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John A. Sims, CP
Paralegal
Law Department

BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Drive - AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828
tel 817-352-2376
fax 817-352-2397
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Rock Island Field Office
1511 47th Avenue
Moline, IL 61265

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 479X) BNSF Railway Company –
Abandonment Exemption – in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

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As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not there are any endangered or threatened species, wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, or areas designated as critical habitat adjacent to or near the line, and 2) if so, what effects the proposed action may have on same.

For your reference I have enclosed a map of the subject railroad line. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

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Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828
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fax 817-352-2397
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

Mr. Michael Reynolds, Regional Director
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102-4226

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Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Northeastern States Field Office
626 E. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 200
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4617

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Email john.sims@bnsf.com

November 4, 2011

US EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

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Abandonment Exemption – in Page and Fremont Counties, Iowa**

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As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not this action will be consistent with Federal, State or local water quality standards, and 2) whether or not Section 402 and/or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") permits are required for performance of the salvage activity described below. Please note: **BNSF anticipates the proposed abandonment should not disturb more than one (1) acre of land.**

For your reference I have enclosed a map of the subject railroad line. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT
PO BOX 2004 CLOCK TOWER BUILDING
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61204-2004**

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

November 16, 2011

Operations Division

SUBJECT: CEMVR-OD-P-2011-1424

John Sims, CP
BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828

Dear Mr. Sims:

Our office reviewed the letter dated, November 8, 2011, concerning the abandonment of 5.95 miles of BNSF railroad line from Milepost 20.05 in Shenandoah, Iowa to Milepost 26.0 in Farragut, Iowa in Page and Fremont Counties in Iowa.

We determined the project as proposed does not require a Department of the Army (DA) Section 404 permit. The decision regarding this action is based on information found in the administrative record which documents the District's decision-making process, the basis for the decision, and the final decision. No indication of discharge of dredged or fill material was found to occur in waters of the United States (including wetlands). Therefore, this determination resulted.

No fill or other materials will be placed in any body of water, including all unnamed tributaries of the East Nishnabota River and Fisher Creek that the BNSF railway crosses. Water flows in the area will not be disrupted and all culverts, ballasts and right of rain will remain intact.

Please contact our office if the project plans change and there is a potential for impacts of dredged or fill material into Corps' regulated waters, which will require a Department of the Army 404 permit.

You are advised that this determination for the project is valid for five years from the date of this letter. If the project is not completed within this five-year period or your project plans change, you should contact our office for another determination.

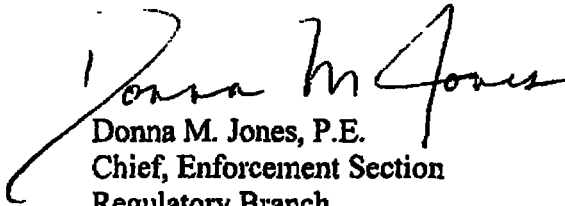
Although an individual DA permit will not be required for the project, this does not eliminate the requirement that you must still acquire other applicable Federal, state, and local permits.

The Rock Island District Regulatory Branch is committed to providing quality and timely service to our customers. In an effort to improve customer service, please take a moment to complete the attached postcard and return it or go to our Customer Service Survey found on our

web site at <http://per2.nwp.usace.army.mil/survey.html>. (Be sure to select "Rock Island District" under the area entitled: Which Corps office did you deal with?)

Should you have any questions, please contact our Regulatory Branch by letter, or telephone Mrs. Kirsten Brown at 309/794-5104.

Sincerely,



Donna M. Jones, P.E.
Chief, Enforcement Section
Regulatory Branch

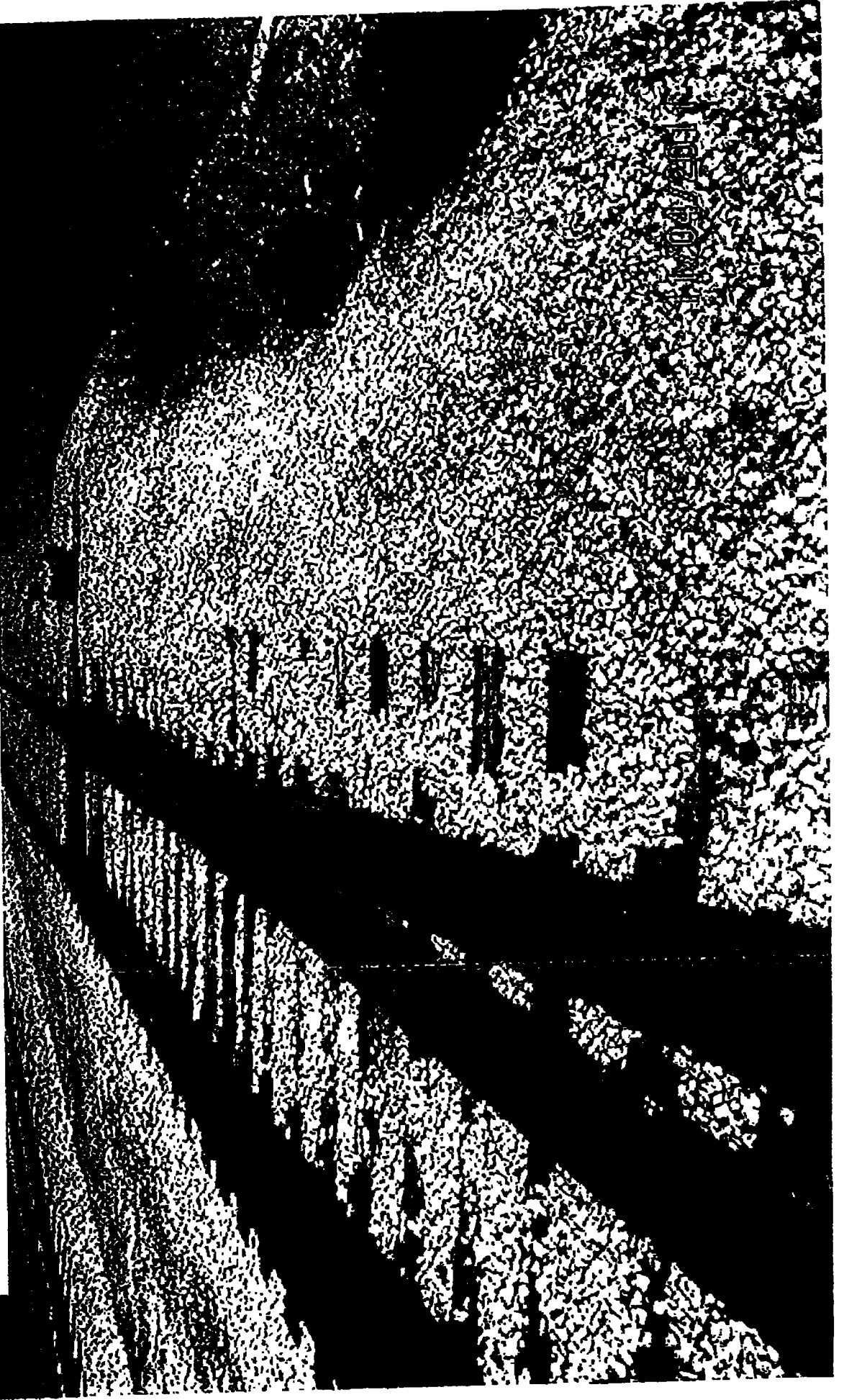
Enclosures

Copies Furnished: (w/o enclosures)

Ms. Christine Schwake (3)
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Water Resources Section
Wallace State Office Building
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034

Ms. Bernadette Taylor (email)
U.S. Army Engineer District, Omaha
Wehrspann Regulatory Office
8901 South 154th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68138-3521

This is where the bridge was filled on pipes at 20.33

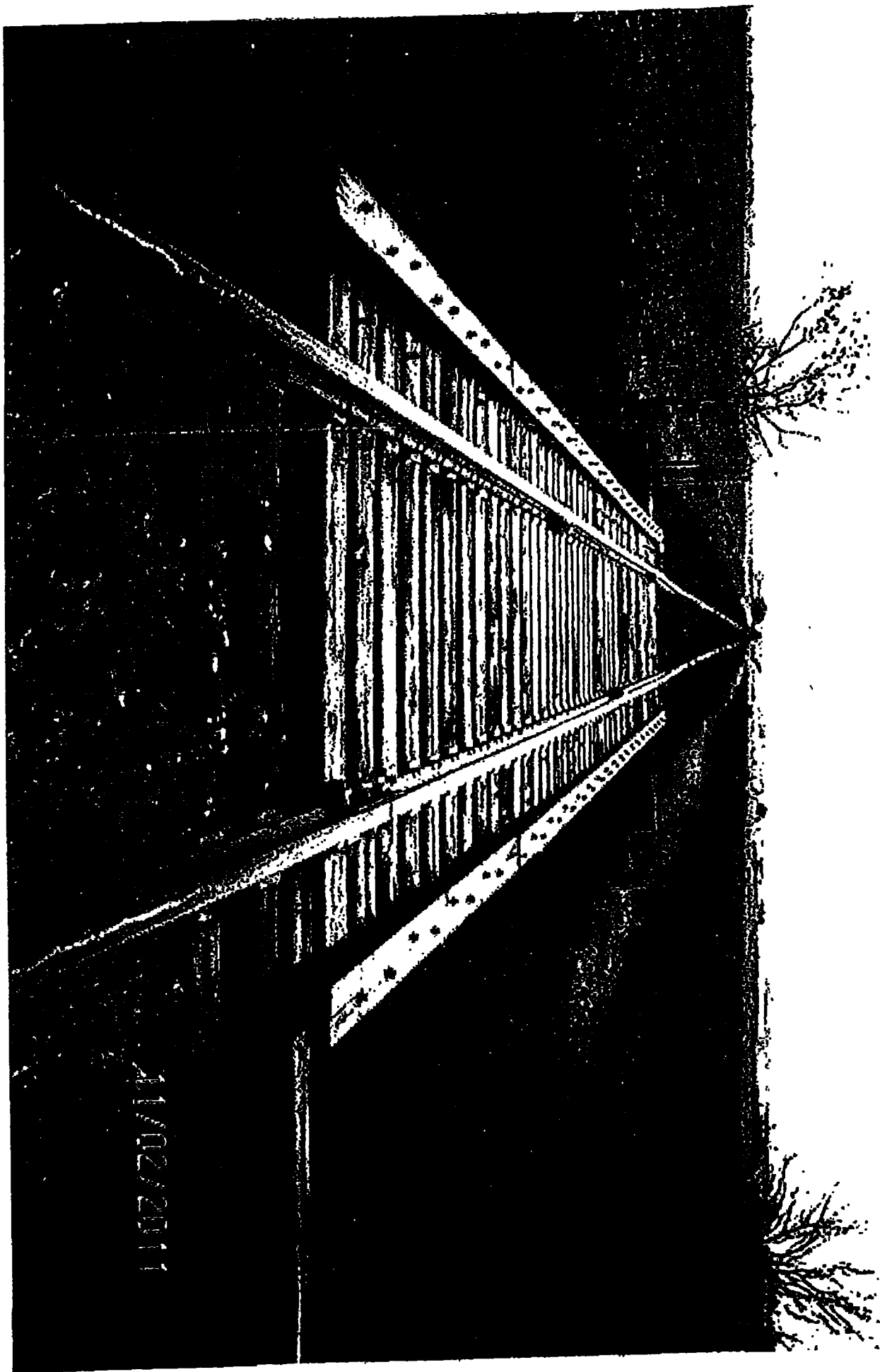


Side view of 20.33

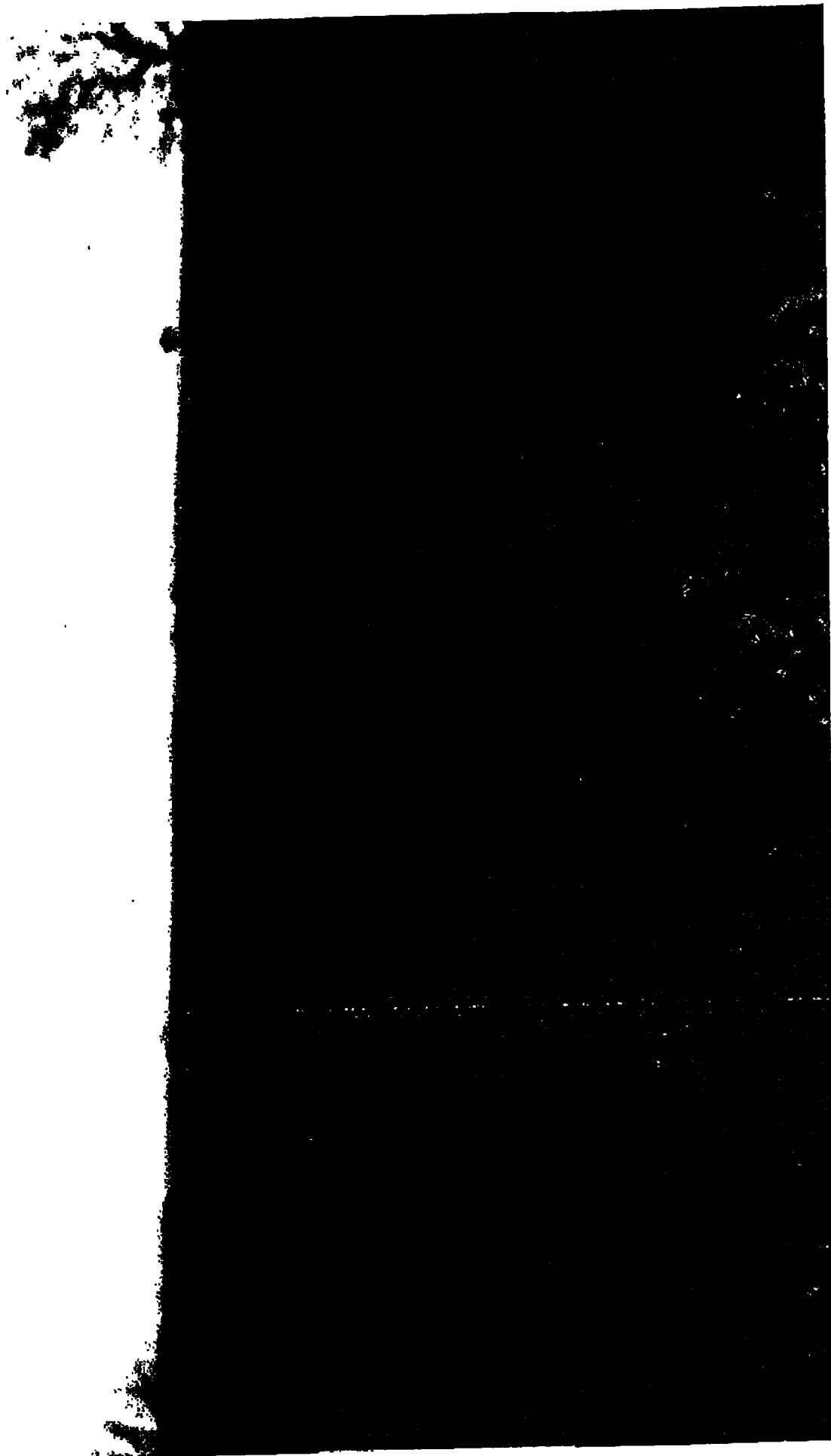
1104/201



21:66



41/02/2011



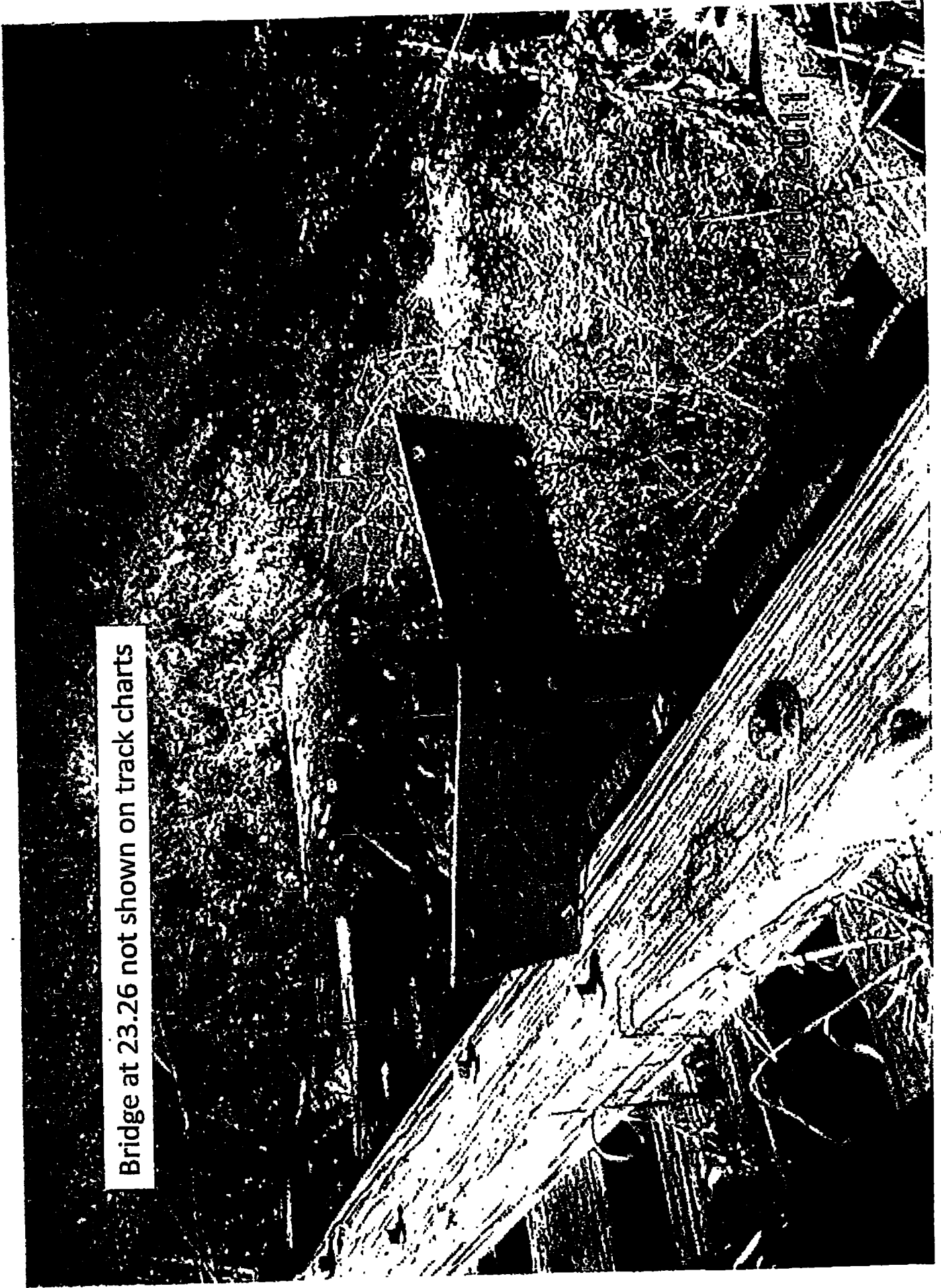




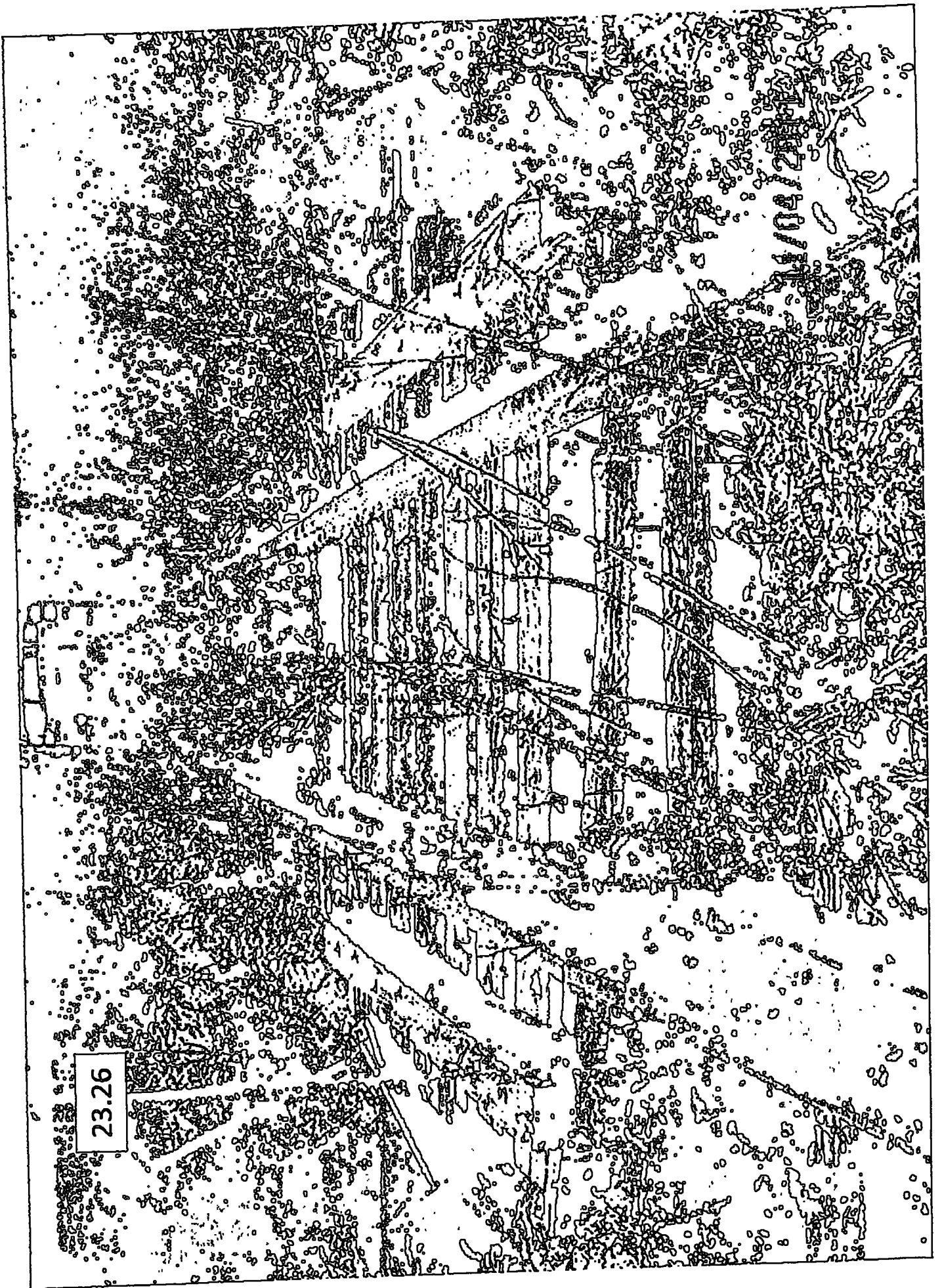


Bridge at 23.26 not shown on track charts

11/15/2011



23.26



23.26



23.26



Bridge 23.66







BRI 23 93



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY TIFFANY COWNIE, DIRECTOR

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY of
IOWA
JEROME THOMPSON
ADMINISTRATOR

IOWA
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
COUNCIL
MATTHEW HARRIS
ADMINISTRATOR

600 E. LOCUST
DES MOINES, IOWA
50319

T. (515) 281-5111
F. (515) 282-0502

CULTURALAFFAIRS.ORG

January 23, 2012

In reply refer to:
R&C#: 111100042

John A. Sims, CP
BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828

RE: STB – PAGE AND FREMONT COUNTY – BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY CO.
– STB DOCKET NO. AB-6 (SUB-NO.479X) – PROPOSED ABANDONMENT
EXEMPTION PROJECT – 5.95 MILES BETWEEN STATION MP20.05 IN
SHENANDOAH ENDING AT END OF LINE MP 26.0 IN FARRAGUT

Dear Mr. Sims,

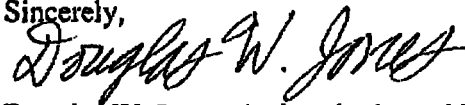
Thank you for providing information to our office concerning the above referenced proposed project. We understand that this project will be a federal undertaking for the Surface Transportation Board (STB) and will need to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. We make the following comments and recommendations based on our examination of this material and in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR Part 800 (revised, effective August 5, 2004); and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Policy Statement on Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation (adopted November 9, 2006), and on The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation recently issued guidance in November 2011 on *Meeting the "Reasonable and Good Faith" Identification Standard in Section 106 Review*.

Based on your information, it is our opinion that this section of track and the six bridges do not meet any of the eligibility criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. We have no comments at this time whether there appears to be any potential that the undertaking will encounter or adversely impact archaeological properties that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as no information was provided in your documentation. We would like to refer you and the STB to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's recently issued guidance in November 2011 on *Meeting the "Reasonable and Good Faith" Identification Standard in Section 106 Review* for guidance on what types of information should be included in the documentation provided for consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. We encourage you to contact the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa to get an archaeological site background check conducted for your undertaking. We will be able to offer further comments on this undertaking and whether it will affect any historic properties, specifically significant archaeological sites, when the archaeological site background check and any other pertinent information about whether archaeological sites are located within the Area Potential Effect is provided to our office.

Please reference the Review and Compliance Number provided above in all future submitted correspondence to our office for this project. We look forward to further consulting with you and the Surface Transportation Board on this project.

We have provided this technical assistance according to our responsibility defined by Federal law. It remains the federal agency's decision on how you will proceed from this point for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Douglas W. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "J".

Douglas W. Jones, Archaeologist and Review and Compliance Program Manager
and Interim Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State Historic Preservation Office
State Historical Society of Iowa
(515) 281-4358

cc: Ralph Christian, Historian, State Historical Society of Iowa
Troy Brady, Environmental Protection Specialist, STB